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# The Art Union

PUBLISHED MONTHLY.

THE OFFICIAL JOURNAL OF THE AMERICAN ART UNION.

Correspondence on Art matters is respectfully solicited.

Notices of all forthcoming Exhibitions and Art Sales throughout the country are desired, as well as copies of the Catalogues of Public and Private galleries and transient Exhibitions, and reports of Art Sales.

All communications relating to the Literary Department should be addressed to CHARLES M. KURTZ, No. 44 East Fourteenth street, Union Square, New York.

All communications relating to the Business Management of the Journal, or having reference to advertising in the Journal or Catalogues of THE ART UNION, should be addressed to "Business Department, American Art Union," No. 44 East Fourteenth street, New York.

For terms of subscription to THE ART UNION, and rates for advertising in the same; see the "Business Department" of this Journal.

VOL. I.

NEW YORK, FEBRUARY, 1884.

No. 2.

## EDITORIAL.

WE have devoted considerable space in this issue of THE ART UNION to a presentation of facts in regard to the great French picture frauds, which have been agitating the art world for some months. That the "country of the dollars"—as the Frenchmen complimentally term America—has suffered severely and paid dearly in consequence of these frauds, there is no doubt. And there have been picture frauds perpetrated at home as well as abroad. The true stories which we shall shortly publish concerning the manufacture and sale of fraudulent pictures in this country, will be such as will astonish many of our readers.

The surprising dexterity of many of the picture counterfeiters renders the editorial advice given to picture buyers, by the journals we have quoted, very proper indeed. Matters have come to such a pass that the average picture buyer can only feel secure when he deals directly with the artist.

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The first number of THE ART UNION was vexatiously late in making its appearance. The greater part of the matter for that number was prepared early in December, on the supposition that the journal could be issued that month. There were delays in the engraving and in the printing, however, that occupied exactly a month. We shall endeavor to guard against possibilities of this nature in the future. Last month one-half of the issue was printed, when we discovered that the press work was falling very far below the required standard. We examined all of the printed sheets, and as they were unsatisfactory, refused to re-

ceive them. The contract for the press-work was then given to another printer, with somewhat better results. But all of this took *time*. The lateness of the issue of the January number considerably delayed the appearance of this February number.

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Owing to the fact that the first number of THE ART UNION was not issued in December, the line which states that the Union was formed "early in the present year" is in error. A typographical mistake was made also in Mr. Smillie's letter on THE ART UNION etching. After favorably commenting upon Mr. Ritchie's excellent printing of the etching, Mr. Smillie wrote: "If we are to have good etchers, we must also have good printers." The types made the last word read "painters."

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We have lately secured publications and documents of various kinds relating to the old American Art Union, which flourished from 1839 until 1852, growing from a most modest beginning, to be, in its time, the greatest influence that existed in American Art. A series of articles will soon be published giving a brief history of the old Art Union and showing the differences between it and the present organization. Thousands of persons throughout the country remember the old society with pleasure. One meets with the engravings, given to its subscribers of from thirty to fifty years ago, in many parts of the country, and interesting reminiscences of the art of the time they are. In those earliest days the most prominent artists in the country were WASHINGTON ALLSTON, THOMAS SULLY, E. G. LEUTZE, S. F. B. MORSE, THOMAS DOUGHTY, THOMAS COLE, HENRY PETERS GRAY, J. F. KENSETT, GEORGE A. BAKER, G. R. BONFIELD, RUSSEL SMITH, THOMAS CUMMINGS, C. P. CRANCH, F. E. CHURCH, A. B. DURAND, ROBERT W. WEIR, DANIEL HUNTINGTON, JASPER F. CROSEY, J. G. CHAPMAN, REGIS GIGNOUX, THOMAS HICKS, and others, whose names are familiar.

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In dealing with the American Art Union, the picture buyer practically deals with the artist, for each artist represented in its galleries is a member of the Union, which receives no pictures whatever except such as are sent directly from the artists' studios. In the case of any sales made, the artist will give the purchaser documentary evidence, if desired, of the complete authenticity of his work. Such evidence might be very useful should the buyer ever desire to dispose of the picture in the future. The American Art Union is the only establishment which makes a point of offering for sale *no* pictures except such as it receives directly from the artists. Indeed, the pictures are invariably the property of the artists themselves until they are sold.